

## Does Organic Always = Better?

**Y**ou know that eating fresh fruits and vegetables is good for your health. But are organic fruits and vegetables safer or more nutritious or worth the extra cost? What does organic mean?

When produce is labeled with the USDA Organic label, it means the fruit or vegetable was produced without conventional pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, bioengineering, or ionizing radiation.

Research has shown that organic produce has less pesticide residues than conventional produce. But the residues in conventional produce was still found to be well below the level that is considered unsafe.

Research has not been able to show that organic fruits and vegetables are more nutritious than conventional produce. Finally, organic produce costs about 50 percent to 100 percent more than conventional grown fruits and vegetables.

So, if you are mostly interested in reducing pesticides in your food and can afford it, buy organic versions of spinach, green peas, sweet bell peppers, celery, potatoes, apples, peaches, pears, cherries and berries.

If you do not want to spend the money on organic produce, you can still reduce pesticide residues by:

- Washing and scrubbing produce under running water (don't use soap!) to remove dirt, bacteria, and surface pesticide residues.
- Remove the peel from fruits and vegetables.
- Remove the outer leaves of leafy vegetables.
- Eat a variety of foods from different sources.



*Adapted from [www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com); [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com); and [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)*

### **Café 60 Dining in Lane County Call for Information**

[www.laneseniormeals.org](http://www.laneseniormeals.org)

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Tues., Wed., Thurs. (541) 942-9261

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##### **River Road Park Annex Building**

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